● 585 The union of the husband and wife is pronounced by the chief who places in the mouth of each a large piece of fish. (1)

831

1. It has already been suggested (Kunike, "Der Fisch als Fruchtbarkeitssymbol bei den Waldindianern Südamerikas, Anthropos, VII 1912, p. 206-229) that the fish could be a sexual symbol among the South American Indians. Tastevin has vigorously criticized this hypothesis (Le poisson symbole de Fécondité ou de Fertilité chez les Indiens de l'Amérique du Sud, id., IX, 1914, p. 405-417). However, the Nambikwara ritual of marriage seems to confirm the first theory. Moreover, fish is directly treated as the symbol of sexual relations in the legend where Maire-Pochy makes a girl pregnant by [110] making her eat the fish which he himself had fished. As the origin of this Tupi story is certainly Andean (Kunike, loc.cit.; Métraux, p. 12-13; Ehrenreich, Ueber die Verbreitung und Wanderung der Mythen bei den Naturvölkern Südamerikas, Congrès international des Américanistes, Stuttgart, 1904, p. 663) we have there a supplementary piece of information concerning the affinity of the Nambikwara with the cultures of the North and West.

881 [110] There is no puberty ceremony for the boys. This is replaced by a ritual of initiation which takes place toward the ninth or tenth year, apparently. It is composed of two essential operations, [553 304] the giving of a name, and the piercing of the lip and of the nasal septum to place some wood ornaments there. The first operation is done directly by the chief, the second by a companion whom he designates to this effect:

50. uetnoãdige iochãdige uilikade uelikãdeli'kinere nukeaiore judotige iurosenie nikama iurojotige (b1)
When the boy is grown the chief, the chief gives him a name. A companion pierces his lip to put in the ornament. He [the chief] orders the hole [for the ornament] to be made.

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2: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939)1948
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

tainship is not hereditary; the chief, when old or sick, designates his successor from the ablest men of the group. The chief's authority is slight; it depends wholly on the good will of the family heads. 622

Relations between neighboring bands are inspired both by fear and by the desire to exchange goods. Warfare, therefore, is closely connected with barter. Groups not acquainted with each other use ritual speech when they meet. 619 438

Before starting a war expedition, a divinatory rite is performed with special songs and dances. An arrow is hidden by the shaman, the outcome of the expedition being pressaged by its appearance the following day. 721 787

LIFE CYCLE

Childbirth.—After the delivery of a child, the placenta is buried in the bush and both parents are subjected to rigid prohibitions concerning food, the use of ornaments, and social contacts. 844

Puberty.—The initiation rite for young men consists of piercing their lips and nose and giving them their adult personal name. At her first menstruation, a girl is isolated for several months in a special shelter outside the village, where she is given ritual food by her mother. At the end of the rite, she takes a long bath in the river; this also constitutes the first step of the marriage ceremony. 881 [304]

Both cross-cousin and avuncular marriages (see p. 367), are often planned by parents for their infant children. Marriage is celebrated by festivals, banquets, and dances. The union is pronounced by the chief. Fish and fishing are important both before and during the ceremony. 584 585

Separation is frequent, the chief cause being that the man seeks a younger and prettier woman. There is no social sanction of adultery, except that the seducer is advised by his companion to go away for a while so as to avoid the husband's revenge. A murderer also flees vengeance. 586 684 682

Death.—Some groups of *Nambicuara* bury their dead in a circular pit, the corpse being placed in a crouching position. Others leave the corpse to decompose in an elongated ditch and later wash the bones in the river, put them in a basket, and bury them in the village, which is then abandoned. Weapons, implements, adornments, and other property of the deceased are destroyed, but his garden—if he owned one—is abandoned only for a few months. Later anybody may cultivate it. 764

ESTHETIC AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Art.—Most *Nambicuara* groups are completely ignorant of drawing, although some groups decorate calabashes with dots and straight and sinuous lines. These are conventionalized reproductions of realistic designs found among other groups. 531

baked manioc and other food which they have been preparing. When the messenger leaves with the food it is a sign that the men will return to camp after sunset.

Before the men arrive the women wash the girl and paint her with a mixture which includes latex from the rubber tree. A series of dots are painted on her face, breasts, abdomen, and thighs (pl. 6, *c* and *d*). When the men come in they dance in front of the girl's hut. She then comes out and is given a name and everyone tries to give her a necklace or some other object. During the night men and women join in the dance, holding hands and dancing in a circle, the dance steps being stamped out with the right foot in the direction in which the circle is moving. A special puberty song is also sung.

The Nambicuara tell of a strange medicine known only to the shamans which is given to girls during the puberty ceremony. It is a blue liquid which, when taken internally, stops menstrual bleeding for the remainder of the girl's life. The Waklítisu claim that they do not use it but that the other Eastern Nambicuara band do. The missionaries informed me that the Kitánrhu use this medicine, and the missionaries seemed to think that it was effective.

MARRIAGE

There is no special marriage ceremony, for when young people go through the puberty rites they are ready for marriage and a mate is selected for them by their parents. The young man, who is to become the husband of a girl just out of seclusion, goes to her parents and helps his future father-in-law build a small hut, and when it is finished the young man tells the girl to come out hunting with him. She takes a burden basket and they go off into the woods. In the afternoon the man builds a fire and tells the girl to prepare some food and honey. After the food has been eaten he tells the girl to come and lie beside him near the fire. She is supposed to resist and he takes a stick and threatens her. He then has sexual intercourse with her, and when they come back to camp that night they are accepted as a married couple. When wives are acquired by inheriting the widow of a brother or by abduction from other bands, no ceremony is held.

542 treated with great affection. The men are jealous of their wives, and
[837] the women take pride in being faithful. In this respect they are quite unlike their neighbors, the Paressi women...

832 The couples are always petting each other, and no caress seems
302 sweeter and more tender to the lover than the woman's fingers running through his hair. This is easy to understand, for the Nambicuara head swarms with vermin...

[Fig. 38]

●585 According to reports of the soldier Gouveia, marriage is a simple ceremony. The man asks the father of his beloved for consent to the union. If the father agrees, he gives the bridegroom a bow and a sheaf of arrows, telling him that with these weapons he must support the family he is about to form. That is all.

851 To show that a boy is the son of a certain man, they use in
201 their innocence an expressive gesture: they join the thumb and index finger of the left hand, in the shape of a ring, around the right extended index finger. Then they tap the child and father on the shoulder, saying "Uétü!" (son).

888 They show great respect for old people and spare them all possible effort. When we returned from the village on the Urutau to the post on the Juina, they had us carry [258] on the bow of our saddles the baskets of two old men from the group that accompanied us in search of gifts. The young men and the women all carried their own atiçú and did not ask for help.

771 As to their religion, we know only that it is fetishistic. We know nothing of its cult or system, and even less of its dogma. [Fig. 33]

821 The northern groups seem to be tending toward astrolatry. Once
[771] when I had threatened the moon and the stars with an arrow, poised ready on a strung bow, several Tagnani rose abruptly and halted my gesture, speaking very excitedly, scolding me, and taking the weapon away from me as if it were a sacrilege.

The Cocozu and Anunze threaten the storm with their weapons, waving their arms in all directions and cursing the rain in loud yells.

Sometimes, instead, the women climb on a termite nest where they let out puffs of smoke and throw ashes into the air to frighten the storm.

764 We do not know anything as yet about their funeral rites. It has been ascertained, however, that they do not cremate their dead and do not eat them. They bury them directly [259] in the ground--
the Cocozu in circular pits, the Tagnani in elongated graves.